

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Promoting a Tobacco-Free Lifestyle for Lung Cancer Awareness Month

Protect your lungs – say no to vaping!

HOUSTON – Lung cancer is the third most common cancer in the United States. In Texas, over 12,000 cases of lung cancer were reported in 2020 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Smoking and using tobacco, like cigarettes, e-cigarettes, cigars, hookah, and chewing tobacco, are the leading cause of preventable deaths in the US. Harris County Public Health (HCPH) encourages residents to practice healthy behaviors during Lung Cancer Awareness Month this November.

The CDC recommends these steps to lower your risk of lung cancer:

- **Don't smoke:** Cigarette smoking causes around 80-90% of lung cancer deaths. Quitting smoking, or not starting the habit, is one of the most important steps you can take for prevention.
- **Avoid secondhand smoke:** Breathing in tobacco smoke from others can be harmful to your health.
- **Take steps to improve indoor air quality at home and work:** Visit the [American Lung Association website](#) for helpful tips on improving air quality indoors by reducing particles that could be harmful to your lungs.

HCPH's Tobacco/Vaping Prevention and Cessation (TC) Program offers free in-person or virtual education sessions to prevent the start of individuals using tobacco/vaping in the community. HCPH specialists work with Harris County community members, schools, community centers, and businesses requesting assistance. Additionally, this program refers participants to the Texas Quitline, a statewide resource that offers free supplies like nicotine patches, gums, and/or lozenges to qualifying residents.

In addition to the free resources provided by HCPH and the State of Texas, you should see a doctor for preventive screenings if you are a smoker and meet the criteria listed below. The U.S. Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends yearly lung cancer screening for people who:

- Have a 20-pack-year* or more smoking history
- Currently smoke or have quit smoking in the last 15 years
- Are 50 to 80 years old

**A pack-year refers to smoking an average of one pack of cigarettes daily for one year.*

HCPH is the local public health agency for the Harris County, Texas jurisdiction. It provides a wide variety of public health activities and services aimed at improving the health and well-being of the Harris County community.

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Residents interested in the TC Program can contact paola.uranga@phs.hctx.net or call (713) 274-8501. To reach the Texas Quitline, call (1) 877-YES-QUIT (1-877-937-7848) or visit yesquit.org. For more information on lung cancer awareness and prevention, visit [the CDC's Lung Cancer page](#).

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